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ABSTRACT

In today's society, parents are often too busy to read with their children or perhaps cannot even read themselves. In response to these problems, the researcher would like to propose that audiobooks are a good alternative to parental reading. This project was designed to show the importance of reading to children. The use of audiobooks was a simple substitute for the warm body that children often need but may not have access to for the experience of reading. The intention was that the additional exposure to reading, whether they were being read to or were reading for themselves, would increase their reading level. In this study, a third grade class composed of 21 students was divided into 2 groups, each alternating as the control and experimental groups for 3 weeks, resulting in a total of 6 weeks for the study. At the 3-week interval, both the control and experimental groups were tested for their frustrating reading level using an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) published by the Houghton Mifflin Company. This test was repeated at the end of the 6 weeks. The data collected were used to compare the control and experimental groups to see if the additional reading helped to increase the students' reading levels. The use of audiobooks in the classroom as a complementary reading program did not show any significant difference in the students' reading levels during this study. This is a program that could be a permanent addition to the classroom used all year long. This research study was conducted for a 6-week period and the students had access to the materials for only 3 weeks. The materials provided for the experiment were available to the students only within the confines of the classroom; therefore, it limited their access to the materials to the free time allowed them in the classroom. This could have affected the results of the study. (Contains 31 references and a table of data. Appendixes contain permission letters and recommended book lists.) (Author/RS)

ED 455 511

A RESEARCH BASED STUDY FOR THE USE OF AUDIOBOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM AS A COMPLEMENTARY READING PROGRAM

An Action Research Project

Presented to the

Department of Teacher Education

Johnson Bible College

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree

Master of Arts in Holistic Education

By

Meredith Ann Clark

July 18, 2001

CS 014 458

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APPROVAL PAGE

This Research Paper by Meredith Ann Clark is accepted in its present form by the Department of Teacher Education at Johnson Bible College as satisfying the action research project requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Holistic Education.

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ABSTRACT

The U.S. Department of Education suggested in *Becoming a Nation of Readers* that "the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (Beers, p.33). Jane Hurry noted that "reading holds a central position in children's education" (Hurry, p.143). Reading is a skill that is essential for life in society. "Current research reveals that children who live in homes where reading and writing are common activities usually experience success with reading when they enter school" (Halsall & Green, p.28).

Parents and other adults can usually read at a higher level than the child thereby challenging the child with a more difficult vocabulary and accelerated reading pace. When children can read along with someone, they have the opportunity to experience the sight and correct sound of words previously unfamiliar to them.

In today's society, parents are often too busy to read with their children or perhaps cannot even read themselves. In response to these problems the researcher would like to propose that audiobooks are a good alternative to parental reading. "A recorded book can, in effect, do what the child is not yet able to do naturally: It verbalizes the printed words with the correct pace, phrasing, and expression" (Carbo, p.57). This project was designed to show the importance of reading to children. The use of audiobooks was a simple substitute for the warm body that children often need but may not have access to for the experience of reading. Using audiobooks in the classroom was a way to increase the children's encounter with reading. The intention was that the

additional exposure to reading, whether they were being read to or were reading for themselves, would increase their reading level.

In this study, a third grade class composed of twenty-one students was divided into two groups, each alternating as the control and experimental groups for three weeks, resulting in a total of six weeks for the study. At the three-week interval, both the control and experimental groups were tested for their frustrational reading level using an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) published by the Houghton Mifflin Company. This test was repeated at the end of the six weeks. The data collected were used to compare the control and experimental groups to see if the additional reading helped to increase the students' reading levels. The use of audiobooks in the classroom as a complementary reading program did not show any significant difference in the students' reading levels during this study. This is a program that could be a permanent addition to the classroom used all year long. This research study was conducted for a six-week period and the students had access to the materials for only three weeks. The materials provided for the experiment were available to the students only within the confines of the classroom; therefore, it limited their access to the materials to the free time allowed them in the classroom. This could have affected the results of the study.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Problem

"Teaching is so much more than simply presenting information and managing behavior" (Patton, p.142). Teachers now have to form a bridge between the home and the school. Research has already shown that children benefit from being read to by others. The Hawthorne Year-Round School in Oakland, CA, has developed the theory that "parents are more likely to become involved in their child's education if they develop a strong, trusting relationship with the child's teachers" (Cohn-Vargas, p.49).

The U.S. Department of Education suggested in *Becoming a Nation of Readers* that "the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (Beers, p.33). Jane Hurry noted that "reading holds a central position in children's education" (Hurry, p.143). Reading is a skill that is essential for success in society.

In these days, many parents and others associated with children lead such busy lives that family reading time is nearly impossible. "Current research reveals that children who live in homes where reading and writing are common activities usually experience success with reading when they enter school" (Halsall & Green, p.28). Parents and other adults can usually read at a higher level than the child thereby challenging the child with a more difficult vocabulary and accelerated reading pace. When children read along with someone, they have the opportunity to experience the sight and correct sound of words previously unfamiliar to them.

Let it also be said that when children have difficulty reading, they often have a decrease in their comprehension level and eventually lose interest in reading. When a child is reading, there is a substantial time lapse between the point that the child sees the word and when he says the word. This time lapse makes reading very laborious. Then for a child to try to remember what he just read after spending so much time trying to figure out each word makes comprehension almost impossible (Carbo, p.57).

In today's society, parents are often too busy to read with their children or perhaps cannot even read themselves. In response to these problems the researcher would like to propose that audiobooks are a good alternative to parental reading. "A recorded book can, in effect, do what the child is not yet able to do naturally: It verbalizes the printed words with the correct pace, phrasing, and expression" (Carbo, p.57). In order for the listening experience to be beneficial to the child, the books should be slightly above his or her reading level. As a result, the child's ability to read, interest level, and confidence as a reader should increase.

Statement of the Problem

In this study the researcher sought to determine if the child's visual following of a written text with the use of audiotapes increased the child's reading and comprehension levels.

Definition of Terms

Sample Size For the purpose of this study the researcher refers to a sample which was composed of the students participating in the study.

Random Sampling A true random sampling would be the chance possibility of anyone in the population being chosen to participate in the study.

Homogeneous Grouping Most of the subjects came from a similar socio-economic background.

Individual Reading Inventory (IRI) The researcher tested the children for their reading level and comprehension of the text using a published test from The Center for Applied Research in Education.

Independent Level A child who read at the independent level could read by himself and usually did not need help with word recognition and comprehension. IRI scores showed that word recognition was at least 99% and comprehension at least 90%.

Instructional Level A child who read at the instructional level could read with occasional help from an instructor. IRI scores showed that word recognition fell between 98% to 91% and comprehension was about 75%.

Frustration Level A child who read at the frustration level usually would not read at grade level without assistance from an instructor and became frustrated with reading material easily. IRI scores showed that word recognition fell at or below 90% and comprehension was at or below 50%.

Auditory Performances Professional storytellers read or recited text to audiences in theaters or on radio shows.

Shared Reading Session A shared reading session was a time when an adult, usually a parent, read to a child and the child read to the adult.

Experimental Group The experimental group was a group of students who received additional reading time using the audiobooks for a three-week time period.

Control Group The control group was a group of students who received no additional reading time with the audiobooks for a three-week time period.

Limitations

There were four limitations that may have effected the data of this research project.

The time allocated for the research was only a six-week period which may not have been of sufficient length to show significant results.

This research was limited to only one classroom with a sample of twenty-two students.

Since the sample came from only one classroom, the study was not done with a true random sample.

The sampling was a homogeneous grouping from a similar socio-economic background.

Assumptions

It was assumed that increased reading by the students would have an effect on the result of the final testing of their reading and comprehension levels.

Parental cooperation was assumed in verifying their child's completion of the reading.

The content of addition and the content of subtraction were enough alike that the scores were added together for the final analysis.

Hypotheses

This research project tested two hypotheses using a control group and experimental group.

The third grade students' reading level will not correlate positively at the .05 level of significance with the amount of time they listen to books on audiotape.

5

There will be no significant difference at the .05 level in the third grade students' level of reading comprehension between the experimental and control groups.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Oral Traditions

Before there was written literature, stories were heard as an oral tradition through theater or family traditions. When literacy began to increase in popularity, "the respected profession of storyteller declined" (Baskin, p.372). During the Victorian era popular authors began to read aloud their works for paying audiences. Then the popularity of the radio drew the enthusiasm of the audiences to hear dramatized stories. But with the development of the television came a decline in interest for "auditory performances" (Baskin, p.372). It was not until the increase in popular books being recorded on tape that the interest began to revive in books.

The competition for the child's attention in this day and age has produced children with a "dysfunctional literacy" (Fisher, p.73). "The typical middle school student reads less than 15 minutes a day for his or her own interest" (Guthrie, p.439). Students are no longer motivated to read voluntarily. Children are being stripped of their creativity because they are so influenced by the television and video games that demand their attention at the expense of a good reading experience.

Parental Involvement in Reading Education

Mary Rose found that parents were astonished at the answer they received for their concern in their child's reading skills. Parents would ask what they could do to improve on their child's reading skills, and Rose would simply answer, "'Please read to your child and have him or her read to you'" (Rose, p.28). She believes that children up

to any age can benefit greatly from being read to. In 1980, Hewison did a study of children between the first and third grades. After administering the Southgate Reading Test, he found that those children who were read to by their mother scored higher than those not read to. The most significant difference was found in a thirty-six percent variance of score between those whose mother read to them and whose mother listened to the child read. "Listening to the child read was more effective than when the parent did the reading" (Miller, p.26). "Social-constructivist learning theory stressed that learning was both social and personal" (Richgels, p.18). Children learned best from interaction with others who are more knowledgeable than themselves. "Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory proposed that cognitive development occurred through an apprenticeship process in which the expert gradually transferred responsibility to the novice as the novice became more competent" (Reese & Cox, p.20). The child (novice) underwent an apprenticeship under the adult (expert). The adult taught the child more skills as he/she became more competent in the skills he/she has already acquired. The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) reports that children comprehended more when an adult modeled the process of reading and self-thought for them before they tried it themselves (CIERA Report).

Silvern concluded a study in 1985 identifying the most beneficial parental practices to increasing children's reading achievement. Children's reading achievement increased when parents read to them 8-10 minutes daily. Children who were allowed to discuss and inquire during the story scored even better. The group that showed the most improvement were those whose parents initiated the discussion of the story (Miller, p.27).

Thus, even the type of parental interaction during learning activities played a key role in the child's achievement.

Following the Vygotskian model, a group of researchers conducted a study of thirty-two children with language delays. Preschool children were chosen from five different classrooms within three school districts in the Pacific Northwest. They were randomly assigned to one of the three groups: (a) a parent and student in a one-on-one shared reading practice, (b) an instructor with student in a one-on-one shared reading practice, and (c) a control group with no additional instruction or one-on-one practice. At the beginning of the study "each child completed the PPVT-R and the Expressive One-Word Vocabulary Test-Revised" administered by either school personnel or by trained graduate student assistants. The parents or staff who worked with the child were instructed during a 1½-hour session of training prior to beginning the procedure and were provided with the two books chosen for testing – Fortunately by Remy Charlip and When I Am Old With You by Angela Johnson. They were given a list of prompting questions to facilitate in the activities and eight strategies to use in reading, with two more bing added each week. Each session with a child was video taped for the duration of ten minutes four times per week. Four weeks later, the children were videotaped using the same book they had read with the adult during the pretest (Crain-Thoreson & Dale, p.34-35). After eight weeks of Diagnostic Reading, the children in the shared reading groups began to participate more in the group discussions. The researchers concluded that "shared book reading with parents and other adults seems to be an ideal context for children to practice and improve their language skills" (Crain-Thoreson & Dale, p.28). The Vygotsky theory of shared reading offers "both social and contextual support of the

development of language (Crain-Thoreson & Dale, p.28). "If they simply read the text and require the child to listen and keep still, they may not provide opportunities for the joint construction of meaning" (Heath, 1982).

"The recent U.S. National Adult Literacy Survey (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1993) found a linear relationship between the literacy of the individual and the education of the parent" (Philliber, p.558). The higher the education of the parent, the higher the literary performance of the child. The Hawthorne Year-Round School in Oakland, CA, developed the theory that "parents are more likely to become involved the their child's education if they develop a strong, trusting relationship with the child's teachers" (Cohn-Vargas, p.49). "Early introduction to books and participation in literate or literacy-related interactions with parents are seen as important in preparing children for instruction in reading and writing at school" (Leseman & de Jong, p.294). Researchers became keenly aware that "reading to children from infancy is the best way to prepare them for lifelong reading success" (Segel, p.26). Not only did children need access to books, they needed a mentor who would help guide them (Segel, p.27). When reading became laborious children began to dread the reading experience. If a mentor was present, whether it was a teacher or parent, the child felt some relief in the hope that he or she would not have to struggle so much with unfamiliar words but there was assistance available. "Parents should see to it that children become aware of the different uses of written language in real-life situations" (Saint-Laurent, p.53). This could be done through reading signs and the newspaper. The child could also realize the importance of a written language by assisting in making a grocery list or taking phone messages.

Holdaway's developmental learning theory was based on the learner engaging in reading as well as social interaction. It was composed of four processes: observation, collaboration, practice, and performance. "A program was created to heighten the awareness of parents, children, and teachers concerning the importance of the role they all play together in the literacy development of children" (Morrow & Young, p.736). A study of 56 children from an inner-city school district in first through third grades was created to show the importance of parental involvement in the child's achievement and motivation for reading. The teachers of both the control and experimental groups modeled the same activities to create an atmosphere for reading and writing. The activities included: (Morrow & Young, p.737)

> (a) reading aloud to children; (b) telling stories using techniques such as felt stories, puppets, prop stories, and creating original stories; and (c) encouraging children to record and practice 'Very Own Words' from words from stories they read and other words of interest to them.

Activities for the children to do were taken from Highlights for Children magazine. Three to five times a week, the children were allowed a 30- to 40-minute center time where they could choose from a variety of reading and writing activities to complete either alone or with others. The completed activities were presented to the teacher. The children participating in the home connection were given an additional copy of the magazine to take home (Morrow & Young, p.737). The parents were asked to continue using similar activities from school or techniques as reinforcement and to keep a journal of all that they did with the child. Parents were to read to and with the child as often as possible. Parents were to attend monthly meetings with other parents and a mentor; as well as submit weekly records of activities they were doing.

> To determine children's growth in achievement, [the researchers] used the following measured: (a) A story retelling and a story rewriting test; (b) A probed comprehension test; (c) The California Test of Basic Skills (1980); (d) teacher ratings of children to determine increased interest and motivation for reading and writing; and (e) interviews of children to determine increased reading at home and with adults (Morrow & Young, p.738).

An analysis of covariance was done with the pretest scores as covariates and the posttest scores as the dependent variables. The measurements of the story retelling test, $F(1,55)= 20.17$, $p<.001$; the story rewriting, $F(1,55)= 41.71$, $p<.001$; and the teacher ratings, $F(1,55)= 33.23$, $p<.001$, showed that the experimental group scored significantly better than the control group. The other tests did not show a significant difference between the two groups. For the most part the study was successful. The students' achievement and motivation levels increased. However, there were some problems with conflicts in parental schedules. The researchers believed that the success of the study was due primarily to the collaborative efforts of the parents, teachers, and children equally (Morrow & Young, p.736-741).

Collins and Shaeffer noted that a child who was read the same book several times over began to notice and associate the pictures with words and the sounds or the spoken words with the text, thus the beginning of reading was occurring (Collins, p.65). After having heard the story several times the child usually would begin to read mimic the sounds and "read" the story himself. Sharon Suskin, the reading coordinator for New Jersey's South Brunswick School District, noticed that "there is such a difference between the kids who are read to at home…and the kids who go home to an empty house" (Richardson, p.18). She believed that this was evident from the moment a child first picked up a book in the school. If a child came to school not having already

acquired these beginning reader's skills they were far behind and found it hard to catch up to their peers (Richardson, p.18). If parents understood that reading to a child was the best way to support their education they might have made it their top priority (Richardson, p.19-20). Audiobooks have been used as a viable alternative to parental reading, especially in cases where parents were unwilling or unable to read with the child.

Connecting Students to Reading

Kylene Beers, a Lecturer in the Department of Library Science at Sam Houston State University, Houston, TX, conducted several observations of classroom reading experiences with the purpose of investigating "how teachers connect students to reading" (Beers, p.31). She found that students who struggled with reading that were introduced to audiobooks were able to connect to reading through listening. One seventh-grade teacher said that the result of this experience was "because they are reading, their reading ability is going up, their interest is going up, and their confidence in themselves as readers is going up" (Beers, p.31). She found that "as students get older, hearing test read aloud continues to increase their decoding and comprehension abilities" (Beers, p.33).

The use of audiobooks was especially helpful because of the scaffolding effect where students could hear a text read to them and follow along with the written text on a level that was slightly above their own fluent reading ability. "Books and tapes allow children to carry out an activity on their own… and should be used more to foster interest in books than to acquire knowledge about written language" (Saint-Laurent, p.54). Beers observed a success story in the classroom of a ninth-grade boy who was reading on a fourth grade level. Because he was able to listen to the same book that the other

students were reading in the class he could then participate in the class discussions of the text (Beers, p.33).

A group of sixteen classroom teachers conducted a research project using their first-grade classrooms. There were 162 subjects, of which 105 were ESL students and 57 were non-English speaking students, divided into four small groups. For seven months, the following treatment existed in the classroom: (a) small-group shared reading at school, (b) small-group shared reading at school and daily rereading at home, (c) small-group shared reading at school with audiotapes at home, and (d) unmodified reading instruction at school or home. Results from comprehension and fluency evaluations revealed that home-based support was the most beneficial and even more so for those who had audiotapes (Koskinen, p.432). This only served to show that "'the more you practice the better you get'" (Koskinen, p.441).

Audiobooks Above Reading Level

Marie Carbo, the Executive Director of the National Reading Styles Institute in Syosset, New York, was one among many researchers who stated that in order for an audiobook reading program to be beneficial to children they must have listened to books slightly above their own independent reading level. Because struggling readers had such a lag in time between the moment they saw a word and the moment they actually said the word, their comprehension level suffered greatly (Carbo, p.56). Special educational research has shown that people could comprehend more words per minute than they could speak, which may account for the reason many children lost interest in the reading text because they slowed their comprehension level down to their level of verbalization.

Listening to audiobooks that were on a more challenging level and recorded at such a steady pace for the child to follow the text improved the child's comprehension level and recognition of unfamiliar words in future reading. The audiobooks created an opportunity for the child to establish a steady pace in reading.

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Selection of Subjects

The subjects were be chosen through a random process from the twenty-two students in the third grade class of an East Tennessee school. Each child was alphabetized and given a number. The children's numbers were randomly drawn to create the initial experimental and control groups containing eleven subjects in each group. Eleven students participated as the experimental group and the other eleven as the control group for the first three weeks of the experiment. Then the subjects changed groups for the last three weeks of the research period. This increased the sample size to twenty-two. The subjects were chosen from a homogeneous group of eight and nine-year-olds in a third grade classroom. They were from similar socio-economic backgrounds in an East Tennessee community.

Testing Procedures

All subjects were given a published test constructed by The Center for Applied Research in Education and the Houghton Mifflin Company at the three-week interval of the research period. The test included a short passage on grade level for the subject to read without assistance followed by several comprehension questions. Several tests were given until the researcher determined the subject's individual frustration level. Each child's frustration level was the baseline that the researcher used for all the subjects to determine the measurement of growth. These tests were repeated at the end of the six weeks.

Time on Task

The testing period lasted for six weeks beginning in January of 2001 through the month of February. The subjects participated for one of the two three-week sessions as the experimental group. The students were required to participate at least sixty minutes per week in reading using the audiobooks. The students were to keep a log of the time they started and stopped reading during each reading duration, and then the teacher or parent was to sign the log for verification. Their reading was to be done during their freetime in the classroom or at home. The researcher had books, audiotapes, tape players and headphones available in the classroom. The subjects also had the suggested book list and had access to the local library where they could check out additional reading material for the research project.

Statistical Analysis

The researcher compared the overall test scores of the subjects for their reading and comprehension level from each of the two testing times. The researcher was to use a t-test to analyze the data between the experimental and control groups. The t-test would have compared the students' scores who experienced additional reading with those who had no additional reading during each of the three-week sessions. The research design should have looked like the following chart.

	First Three Weeks	**Second Three Weeks**
Experimental Factor	Group A	Group B
Control Factor	Group B	Group A

The scores of IRI testing were factored for both groups from the baseline of each individual's frustration level. All subjects were tested at the three-week interval and at the end of the six weeks. The t-test would have compared the scores from the experimental and control groups.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

A paired Sample test compared the frustration levels of both the experimental and control groups of third graders. Both groups had experienced three weeks of additional reading and three weeks of no additional reading at alternating times. Each group was tested using an IRI to determine the frustration level of each individual student at the three-week interval and the six-week culmination. At the end of the complete six-week experiment, the student's individual frustration reading levels were compared. There was found to be no significant difference between the control and experimental groups in their average frustration reading levels tested by an IRI. Therefore, the researcher retains the hypothesis because there was no difference in the standard error or the mean.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF AVERAGE FRUSTRATIONAL READING LEVELS FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL THIRD GRADE STUDENTS

Groups	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
EXPERIMENTAL (Additional Reading)	**5.2381****	**21**	**2.98169**	**.65066**
CONTROL (No Additional Reading)	**5.2381****	**21**	**2.98169**	**.65066**

****The correlation and t cannot be computed because the standard error of the difference is 0.**

As can be seen in Table 1 there was no difference in the frustrational reading levels for the experimental third grade students compared to the control third grade students. Children who spent additional time reading and listening to audiobooks

showed no significant difference in the child's reading ability, as measured by the IRI.

The students were to record the amount of listening time during each session. However, that did not happen. Often the students forgot to record their listening time, and the teacher was occupied instructing other students and was not aware of the lack of record keeping. Due to the lack of accurate records, the results of the correlation of the control and experimental groups based on the amount of time they spent listening could not be accurately computed. Therefore, the correlation of time was not included in the results as was promised in the first hypothesis.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Research

Using audiobooks in the classroom was a way to increase the children's encounter with reading. The intention was that the additional exposure to reading, by being read to and following the written text, would increase their reading level. In this study, a third grade class was divided into two groups each alternating as the control and experimental groups for three weeks, resulting in a total of six weeks for the study. At the three-week interval, both the control and experimental groups were tested for their individual frustration reading level using an IRI published by the Houghton Mifflin Company. These tests were repeated at the end of the six weeks. The data collected were used to compare the control and experimental groups to see if the additional reading with the enhancement of audiobooks helped to increase the students' reading levels.

Conclusions

Implementation of Audiobooks in the Classroom

The use of audiobooks in the classroom as a complementary reading program did not show any significant difference in the students' reading levels. There was no difference found. This research study was conducted for a six-week period and the students had access to the materials for only three weeks. The materials provided for the experiment were available to the students only within the confines of the classroom; therefore, it limited their access to the materials to the free time allowed them in the classroom. This could have affected the results of the study.

Possible Reasons for No Significance in the Research

Several factors may have contributed to the research results showing no significance between the experimental and control groups:

The use of audiobooks in the classroom was only for a six-week period. Each group was only allowed to use them for three weeks. A three-week time period was not sufficient enough to allow for measurable change to take place in the students' reading ability; thus, the student's individual frustration reading levels on both IRI tests showed no change.

The students were to participate for at least an hour a week. Often times the students did not have that amount of time available to participate each week. There were days that they could not spend the time listening to the audiobooks due to class projects, special areas classes, curriculum guides, etc. Due to the lack of access to the materials available for the project, the time allowed for the research was limited to that spent in the classroom. The students may have chosen to use their free time in the classroom to participate in the project. That meant that they had to complete all of their assigned work in the classroom before participating.

The students were to record the amount of listening time during each session. However, that did not happen. Often the students forgot to record their listening time, and the teacher was occupied instructing other students and was not aware of the lack of record keeping. Due to the lack of accurate records, the results of the correlation of the control and experimental groups based on the amount of time they spent listening could not be accurately computed. Therefore, the correlation of time was not included in the results as was promised in the first hypothesis.

Recommendations

Suggestions for Further Research

This project was designed to show the importance of reading to children. The use of audiobooks was a simple substitute for the warm body that children often need but may not have access to for the experience of reading. In chapters 1 and 2, researchers have shown that children who grew up being read to at home became better readers. This research project could be applied to the realm of a home and school reading connection for the advancement of children's reading abilities. However, it would require a major commitment on the part of the parents or guardian at home for that type of project. It would be beneficial to have a longer period of time for this project to show any significant difference in the children's reading levels.

Replicating the Study

Changes in the area of time should be made in order to replicate this study. A six-week time period, allowing each group only three weeks to act as the experimental group, is not long enough to show any significant difference between the experimental and control groups. It would be beneficial to allow a longer period of time for the experiment to show any major difference between the experimental and control groups reading levels.

Also, a more timely and accurate way to test the students using the IRI in determining their frustration reading level would be beneficial in progressing through the testing period more efficiently. Each student was tested individually for as long as it took to determine his/her frustration reading level. This was very time consuming for one teacher to test twenty-one students.

Suggestions for Use of Audiobooks in the Classroom

Using audiobooks in the classroom as a complementary reading program could be a beneficial addition to the reading experience for children. This is a program could be a permanent addition to the classroom used all year long. It would allow them to gain interest in stories by being exposed to multiple voices for the characters in the stories presented at a reading pace that keeps their interest. The entrancing appearance on the students' faces that participated in this project reaffirmed the enjoyment of reading. People of all ages enjoy being read a good story.

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KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS
ANDREW JOHNSON BUILDING

Dr. Charles Q. Lindsey, Superintendent

November 28, 2000

Ms. Meredith Ann Clark
5809 Green Valley Road
Knoxville, Tennessee 37914

Dear Ms. Clark:

You are granted permission to contact appropriate building-level administrators concerning the conduct of your proposed research study entitled, "A Research Based Study for the Use of Audiobooks in the Classroom as a Complementary Reading Program." In the Knox County schools final approval of any research study is contingent upon acceptance by the principal(s) at the site(s) where the study will be conducted.

In all research studies names of individuals, groups, or schools may not appear in the text of the study unless *specific* permission has been granted through this office. The principal researcher is required to furnish this office with one copy of the completed research document.

Good luck with your study. Do not hesitate to contact me if you need further assistance or clarification.

Yours truly,

Samuel E. Bratton, Jr.

Samuel E. Bratton, Jr., Ed.D.
Coordinator of Research and Evaluation
Phone: (865) 594-1740
Fax: (865) 594-1709

Project No. 116

P.O. Box 2188 • 912 South Gay Street • Knoxville, Tennessee 37901-2188 • Telephone (865) 594-1800

August 29, 2000

Dear Parent,

Years of research have revealed that reading to children has been beneficial in developing good reading skills and a love for books. You may already share in the enjoyment of reading with your child. If not, I hope this will be an opportunity for you to share in the experience of your child's growing love for books.

As an intern in Mrs. Johnson's classroom I am required to conduct a research project. The success of my research relies greatly on parental involvement. I am providing a recommended reading list and many of the audiotapes will be available in the classroom, but other copies can be acquired at the Lawson McGee Library downtown. I am asking that you verify each time your child reads along with the audiotapes by signing a weekly reading sheet. The weekly reading sheets will be used to record the amount of time your child reads. These sheets will be sent home in your child's green folder on Monday afternoons and are to be returned on the following Monday morning. There will also be extra copies of the weekly reading sheets in the classroom if you need them.

My research will begin in January 2001 and end in the month of February. Half of the class will be participating in the first three weeks and the other half during the second three weeks. As soon as all permission slips have been returned we will inform you of which weeks your child will be participating. For your privacy there will be no personal references to you or your child in the research.

If you have any questions regarding the research please feel free to contact me at school during the day at (865)539-7850 or in the evenings at (865)523-4956. Thank you for your participation in this project.

Please sign and return the attached permission form as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Vicki H. Andrews
Vicki Andrews

Lucy Johnson
Lucy Johnson

Meredith Clark
Meredith Clark

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

URGENT! Please sign and return by Friday, December 15, 2000.

Thank you,

Meredith Clark

I _____ give my child _____ permission to participate in Mrs. Johnson's classroom research.

I _____ do not give my child _____ permission to participate in Mrs. Johnson's classroom research.

Date: _____

RECOMMENDED BOOK LIST

Armstrong, William H.	Sounder
Avi	Captain Grey
Avi	The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle
Avi	Who was that Masked Man, Anyway?
Babbitt, Natalie	Tuck Everlasting
Banks, Lynne Reid	The Indian in the Cupboard
Blos, Joan W.	A Gathering of Days
Blume, Judy	Tales of the Fourth Grade Nothing
Brink, Carol Ryrie	Caddie Woodlawn
Byars, Betsy	The Summer of the Swans
Cleary, Beverly	Dear Mr. Henshaw
Cushman, Karen	Catherine, Called Birdy
Dahl, Roald	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
Dalgliesh, Alice	The Courage of Sarah Noble
Filipovic, Zlata	Zlata's Diary
Fitzhugh, Louise	Harriet the Spy
Fleischman, Paul	Bull Run
Fleischman, Sid	The Whipping Boy
Forbes, Esther	Johnny Tremain
Fox, Paula	The Slave Dancer
George, Jean Craighead	Julie of the Wolves
George, Jean Craighead	My Side of the Mountain
Giff, Patricia Reilly	Lily's Crossing
Gipson, Fred	Old Yeller
Greene, Bette	Summer of My German Soldier
Hesse, Karen	Out of the Dust
Hinton, S.E.	The Outsiders
Konigsburg, E.L.	From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler
L'Engle, Madeleine	A Wrinkle in Time
Lester, Julius	To Be A Slave
Lewis, C.S.	Chronicles of Narnia
Lowry, Lois	Number the Stars
Montgomery, L.M.	Anne of Green Gables
Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds	Shiloh
O'Dell, Scott	Island of the Blue Dolphins
O'Dell, Scott	Sing Down the Moon
Paterson, Katherine	Bridge to Terabithia
Paterson, Katherine	The Great Gilly Hopkins
Paterson, Katherine	Jacob Have I Loved
Paulsen, Gary	Hatchet
Paulsen, Gary	Nightjohn
Rawls, Wilson	Where the Red Fern Grows
Reeder, Carolyn	Shades of Gray

Reiss, Johanna	The Upstairs Room
Selden, George	A Cricket in Times Square
Spinelli, Jerry	Wringer
Spyri, Johanna	Heidi
Taylor, Midred	Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
Tolkien, J.R.R.	The Hobbit
Travers, P.L.	Mary Poppins
White, E.B.	The Trumpet of the Swans
Yolen, Jane	The Devil's Arithmetic